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SPIN OFF

Basement Tapes recreate old Dylan

How time flies. It's been eight years since Bob Dylan and The Band got back together in the basement of the "big pink" house in West Saugerties, N.Y., for some home recordings, the first time since Dylan's near-fatal motorcycle accident a year earlier.

The accident had interrupted a halyconic rise to the rock apocalypse and it has obviously tempered Dylan's career ever since.

But the reunion with The Band, the Canadian musicians with whom he was barnstorming the world with intense rock 'n' roll, was one of the celebrated mysterious magic moments of 1960s rock lore. Bootleg copies of the "basement tapes" became commonplace, as Dylan hid from public performances.

Today the singer is not as talked about as he once was, and his fans have often taken to criticize him, but he remains one of rock's charismatic creators.

Now Dylan has officially released the basement tapes, remixed and with the tape hiss removed to provide the best possible fidelity to those moments between June and October in 1967 when singer and musicians reunited in work.

The two-disc set contains 24 songs, some of them recorded by others (You Ain't Goin' Nowhere, Tears of Rage, Too Much of Nothing), in which Dylan and the Band plunge into the music with a kind of freedom and relief that has never been captured on their other recorded collaborations.

The sounds, transmitted over three microphones at most, are clear (spiced with a certain "basement" murkiness) and immediate, and we are at once reminded of rock 'n' roll as a popular folk art in which creation comes during the moment, and not through "production" as is most of today's recorded music.

The communication between Dylan and the Band has never seemed so easygoing as it is here. In particular, guitarist Robbie Robertson and organist Garth Hudson seize the opportunity to create fine flourishes around the singer's theatrics. There's genuine drama when Dylan sings (not the kind of propped-up postering mistaken for theatre by the fans of David Bowie, et al), and these **Basement Tapes** provide the most spontaneous example anywhere.

—Juan Rodriguez

Roger McGuinn's power

If it is true to say that Los Angeles has a musical sound then it would be country rock in the tradition of The Byrds and Buffalo Springfield.

Roger McGuinn's new album **Roger McGuinn and Band** is his best since the Byrd's' breakup.

The material is consistently good and his distinctive vocals benefit from the soaring high harmonies. His band also provides more power and energy than on his previous solo albums.

Lover of the Bayou and Bull Dog are both particularly strong cuts, but the strength of the entire album lies in the overall quality of the material.

The new Southern Hillman Furay Band album **Trouble in Paradise,** on the other hand, suffers from a lack of any really strong material. With the exception of, perhaps, Mexico, there are really no outstanding cuts and, although the musicianship throughout is competent, the album lacks any real bite.

Very often a change of labels gives an artist a fresh charge of energy. Unfortunately, this is not the case with Stephen Stills' new album on Columbia, **Stills.** He sounds extremely ored working his way through some average songs. Saa to say, there is none of the magic anl sparkle of the Stills of old.

Poco's move to RCA, however, could be just the boost they need to jump to superstardom. Their new album, **Head Over Heels,** is the best the yhave done in quite a while. While this album may not contain the hit single they need it is full of fresh and lively music. The harmonies in I've Been Thinking take one's breath away, while songs such as Making Love keep your foot tapping.

The most successful country rock band of the moment are the Eagles.

To find out why you simply have to take a listen to **One of These Nights.** The title track is already a hit single, and there are other cuts equally as good. The rolling Lyin' Eyes the beautiful Take It to the Limit, and the orchestral bongo piece Journey of the Sorcerer are just some of the standouts on yet another great Eagles' album.

—Doug Pringle

Images revives sentiment

Phil Woods/Michel Legrand's Images devotes side one to pop songs.

Phil Woods writes: "Some of the purists (a truly unfortunate word) will of course object to the songs. But, to the best of my knowledge, melody did not go into the Channel with Glen Miller and is reported alive and well and living in Buenos Aires, Bangkok and Bismark, North Dakota. Also — I just happen to like beautiful tunes."

And well, yes, these are beautiful tunes, rendered to lyrical perfection. Occasionally, the strings make the arrangements a little too sentimental for repeated listening, but there is definitely a place in this electronic infested world for plain sentimental romancing.

Side two features an unconventional rendition of Claude Debussy's Clair de Lune with Phil Wood's alto meandering prettily on top.

The climax of the Phil Word/Michel Legrand adventure is a jazz suite in the big band style written by Michel Legrand: Images. It's an extravaganza with some solid cookin' and riffin' between the two soloists, strong and swinging backing from the brasses, reeds, and string sections and an exciting contemporary bit band sound. Quite a feat.

Woody Herman is absolutely impossible! There's so much music, drive and energy in the man that one wonders where it all comes from. The famous Herds have never been just a big band, they've always been one of the toughest schools of music for performers, writers, arrangers and audiences alike.

Now, with Children of Lima Woody adds a full symphony orchestra to his Thundering Herd. In 1945 it had been news when Igor Stravinsky composed The Ebony Concerto for the band. It's news again now that The Herd and the Houston Symphony swing together with two beautiful compositions by young New Zealander Alan Broadbent.

One side of the album is devoted to the purpose, and make no mistake, it does happen, with Woody on soprano and clarinet.

Side two is the Herd with the usual repertory. Far In, another Broadbent tune swings straight ahead, with the three tenors featured. Never Let Me Go gives Greg Herbert a chance to strech out for some tenor arabesques, supported by the band toward a poetic climax. Where Is The Love becomes a fine dance number with fine from Herbert on alto, flute this time and Frank Tiberi on bassoon.

As Woody says, "You take their material — the music the kids are listening to — and then you make it so hot they can't stand it." Well, Woody, Please keep on thundering on.

The Beach Boys are making more money with oldie albums than they did originally.

Airwaves ooze golden oldies to keep aging kids tuned in

Rock & Pop

by Juan Rodriguez

Remember when it was hip for teenagers to put down their parents for looking back to "the good old days" of Frank Sinatra and Rudy Vallee?

Well, the kids are getting old, and now they're listening to remodelled versions of songs they raved to a decade or so ago. The airwaves ooze modern throwbacks that strive to simulate the original feeling and atmosphere by using the slick recording techniques of today.

Witness: Elton John plunges into a sentimentalized version of the Beatles' purported LSD anthem, Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds. Ah, the golden summer of 1967! Peace and flowers in yer hair. And who is that on the chorus? None other than John Lennon, whose recent hit on the radio was a redone Stand By Me, the Ben E. King oldie.

Anne Murray recorded her "favorite" Beatles song, You Won't See Me, to the Top Ten, and Blood Sweat & Tears are trying to resuscitate their career with a rendering of Lennon & McCartney's Got To Get You Into My Life.

Remember the golden days of Motown? Encore! Now we've got the Carpenters' version of Please Mr. Postman (the 1962 Marvellettes hit), Postman (the 1962 Marveletts hit), Gloria Gaynor with Reach Out (I'll Be There) (formerly by the Four Tops), and James Taylor, whom only a few short years ago was hailed as the be all and end all of his contemporary songwriting, has his first hit after a long dry spell with How Sweet It Is (the old Marvin Gaye success).

DISCO BEAT

Linda Ronstadt hits with You're No Good, while Tony Orlando and Dawn nourish their careers with He Don't Love You (Like I Love You). Frankie Valli, former lead singer with the Four Seasons, adopts the disco beat and has a huge hit, Swearin' To God, prompting someone named Sammy Johns to revive the Seasons' old Rag Doll.

All of the above suggests there's a dearth of new songs on the hit parade. Also that the people who grew up to these oldies just won't let go of the past. They are now radio programmers and recording executives, and they have the power to bring back the good old days.

Naturally, the modern copies fail miserably, almost without exception, to equal the intensity of the originals, primarily because they are so intent on retaining stylized remembrances of the "hooks" and harmonics that made them famous. The spontaneity is rarely there, the singers rely almost totally on the familiarity of the tune to get them by.

Not only are both newcomers and superstars alike mining the past for potential big bucks, but so are the old rock 'n' roll stars.

Neil Sedaka is "rediscovered" by Elton John, signed to his record company, and has a huge hit (Laughter In The Rain).

Then, one of Sedaka's songs from his comeback album, Love Will Keep Us Together, is revamped as the first hit for a new group called The Captain & Tennille.

This group is led by the former recording engineer responsible for the sound of some of the hits of the Beach Boys, whose oldie, Help Me Rhonda, has resurfaced as the first success in ages for Johnny Rivers (who started out in the record business with his own copies of hits by Chuck Berry and Smokey Robinson).

Of all the acts to benefit from the pining for the good old days, the Beach Boys (who play the Forum on Aug. 31) provide the strangest example.

The main protagonists of the "surf sound" of the early 1960s, they were considered the great white American hope against the tide of the Beatlemania invasion and they had at least a dozen hits. When the psychedelic revolution blew barbershop harmonies off the charts, the Beach Boys tried to get more "progressive" with their music. They received plenty of critical acclaim for these efforts, but their new works did not sell well.

COMPILATION

Today, however, the Beach Boys have three albums in the Top 50. Each is a compilation of their old hits, each has grossed over $1 million, and the group is making more money with these oldie albums than they did originally.

Recently, after 14 years as a group, The Beach Boys played before the largest audience of the career. 200,000 people saw them perform on the same bill with one of the supergroups of the new age of rock, Chicago, who, ironically, returned to the hit parade with a song about, and entitled, Old Days.

Hay mishap robs Opry of star

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — (UPI) — Sam McGee, the oldest member of the Grand Ole Opry, was killed Thursday in a hay-cutting accident on his 400-acre farm near here.

The 81-year-old veteran guitar picker was run over by a tractor and suffered multiple injuries, according to a Williamson County hospital spokesman.

Known as one of the best flat top guitar pickers in the business, McGee has been a member of the Opry family since 1925. He and the late uncle Dave Macon joined the Opry the same night 50 years ago.

"I've never missed more than two or three Opry performances a year," McGee said when honored as the oldest living member of the Opry several years ago. "When Saturday night comes, I just want to be there — I gotta be there."

His trade mark was his giant, calloused hands that show the lines and creases of his farm and field work. His music was traditional country.

McGee's death is the fifth of a country music personality in six weeks. Earlier this week veteran Opry comic "cousin Jody," born James Clell Summey, died after an extended illness. He was 61 and had been with the Opry for nearly 30 years.

On the airwaves for the weekend

TODAY

10:25 a.m. (CJFM) Audio Corner. Noise Reduction Systems.

1:00 p.m. (CPFM) The California Special. The great hits from Southern California — 1960 — 1975.

4:00 p.m. (CJFM) Montreal Bestsellers. An hour of music from the top-selling albums in Montreal, with host Mike Godin.

8:03 p.m. (CBM-AM) CBC Stage. The Prime Minister and the Angel, by Czech writer Ivan Klima, translated by Ruth Willard. Otto Lowy plays both lead roles in this study of personal power in a state ruled by a totalitarian government.

8:03 p.m. (CBC-FM) The Entertainers. A profile of the Dutch classic-rock group, Focus. Also, an interview with singer-songwriter Michael Hasek, and cuts from his LP.

9:30 p.m. (CBM-AM) Regional Orchestras. Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Kazuyoshi Akiyama: Romeo and Juliet, excerpts from Suites 1 and 2, Prokofieff.

10:03 p.m. (CBM-AM) Anthology. Desolation Now, Part 1, by Barry Callaghan. The first of two essays about the New York scene in the late 1960's.

11:03 p.m. (CBM-FM) The Great Canadian Gold Rush. The third of a four-part series on The Beach Boys.

SUNDAY

7:00 a.m. (CJFM) The Rock that Never Rolls. Dale Yancey hosts this religious program.

8:00 a.m (CKVL - FM) Songs of Our People. The fourth is a series of high Jewish holiday specials.

10.25 a.m. (CJFM) Audio Corner. Getting Rid of Static.

11:00 a.m. (CPFM) People. Host John Dohabie talks to Harry Gulkin, producer of the movie, "Lies My Father Told Me".

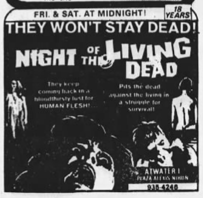
1:03 p.m. (CBM-AM) The Entertainers. A profile of the popular Dutch classical-rock group, Focus.

3:03 p.m. (CBM-AM) The Bush and the Salon. Almighty Voice. The story of a young Cree Indian who became a fugitive from the law.

4:03 p.m. (CBM-AM) Summer Music from Vancouver Island. With the Courtenay Youth Music Camp Faculty Orchestra conducted by Simon Streatfield.

5:00 p.m. (CJFM) Words and Music. (Part 2) John Donabie discusses the music and background of The Rolling Stones.

ODEON THEATRES



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